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CONFRONTING IRAQ'S WMD THREAT:

COERCIVE INSPECTIONS OR MILITARY INTERVENTION

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CONFRONTING IRAQ'S WMD THREAT:
COERCIVE INSPECTIONS OR MILITARY INTERVENTION

"The object of war is a better state of peace…"
- Sir Basil Liddell Hart, Strategy[1]

Liddell Hart's well-known observation highlights that wars are ultimately judged by their direct and indirect political consequences. Although coalition forces were able to achieve the limited political objectives of the Persian Gulf War, they were unable to eliminate the key factor that led to military intervention, the aggressive behavior of Saddam Hussein.[2] Deterrence and containment have since become central to our post-war confrontation with Iraq. Unfortunately, containment is fracturing after a decade of use. Deterrence is problematic when matched against an increasingly robust Iraqi WMD program singularly controlled by an unpredictable and ruthless decision-maker in Saddam Hussein. New forms of compellence are required to force Saddam to disarm before Iraq has the capability to blackmail the rest of the world with an actual nuclear or advanced biological warfare capability. U.N.-led inspectors augmented by military force should serve as the focus of a coercive diplomacy regimen designed to discover, disarm, monitor and verify Iraq's WMD program. If inspections fail, pre-emptive military intervention can force regime change and compel Iraqi WMD disarmament.

INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC ENVIRONMENTS

The international and domestic environments establish the political context for a discussion of the non-military elements of statecraft and the military options in confronting Iraq. The most important characteristic of the international setting is the absence of strategic rivalry and competitive balancing in the post-Cold War world. The United States maintains the dominant role in an array of alliance partnerships and multilateral governance institutions that inhibit balance-of-power politics and promote security cooperation.[3] Globalization and economic

interdependence feed off this political climate. Command-and-control economies are rejected for liberal free markets and prior Cold War rivals seek greater integration into the global economy. In the military arena, armed conflict between great powers is no longer the greatest threat to international peace and security. However, technological advances permit capabilities, previously reserved for great powers, to proliferate to lesser players. Life at President Bush's "crossroads of radicalism and technology" allows "weak" state and non-state actors to directly threaten the national security of the United States.[4]

Exceptionalism is the most compelling factor of the domestic strategic culture and central to the domestic context towards confronting Iraq. The United States sees itself as an extraordinary nation with a special role to play in human affairs. Without a definitive threat in the 1990s, America often practiced Trevor McCrisken's "exemplary" strand of exceptionalism. Absent the driving force of Cold War superpower politics, the United States looked to cash in on the peace dividend, felt aloof from world troubles, and largely saw it sufficient to lead by example.[5] Emphasis on foreign aid plummeted and intervention, when deemed necessary, tolerated minimal costs.

September 11th was a watershed event that changed America's perception of foreign policy and its view of exceptionalism. The terrorist attacks ended a decade of foreign policy complacency where America believed foreign engagement was a matter of choice and not necessity. In The National Security Strategy of the United States of America (NSS), President Bush says basic freedoms hold "true for every person [and] every society" in a world where democracy and free enterprise form the "best foundations for domestic stability and international order."[6] Bush advocates a return to the "missionary" view of exceptionalism. It is not enough to

lead by example. The United States must use its "unparalleled military strength and great economic and political influence…to create a balance of power that favors human freedom."[7]

OPPORTUNITIES

September 11th also revealed the intersection of transnational and traditional threats and provided new opportunities for action. American awareness of its vulnerability to terrorism coupled with the ramifications of a growing WMD threat crystallized American national will to assume a leadership role in the Global War on Terrorism. President Bush's linkage of terrorists and countries that support terrorism blunted Iraq's effort to divide world opinion on sanctions and provided a springboard for further action.

The warming of U.S.-Russian relations since September 11th and the Bush Doctrine of unilateral action against imminent WMD threats have enabled political maneuvering room that was not available before the terrorist attacks.[8] Iraq had been able to flagrantly disregard 16 U.N. resolutions, continue its WMD program, and not provoke a comprehensive U.N. response. Bush's ability to rally world opinion about U.N. relevancy showed how far world opinion had moved since September 11th. The decision is no longer whether the world should confront Iraq but how it should confront Saddam's regime.

THREAT

Why is the United States motivated to decisively confront Iraq *now* when Iraq is not yet definitively linked to the September 11th terrorist attacks? Dr. Ilana Kass provides an insightful threat model to help answer the question, "Why now?"

Threat = Capabilities x Intentions x Vulnerabilities[9]

The Persian Gulf War and twelve years of economic sanctions have crippled Saddam's conventional military capabilities. Iraq's military is significantly outmatched by the United

States military in terms of conventional capability. Saddam seeks to offset his conventional disadvantage with a growing WMD capability. According to an October 2002 CIA white paper, Iraq continues its WMD program despite U.N. resolutions and restrictions. "Since inspections ended in 1998," the CIA contends, "Iraq has maintained its chemical weapons efforts, energized its missile program, and invested more heavily in biological weapons; most analysts assess Iraq is reconstituting its nuclear weapons programs."[10] Iraq's chemical program now leverages off dual-use infrastructure, delivery research has expanded into UAV development, and biological weapons capability exceeds pre-Gulf War estimates. The rebuilt nuclear program, if left unchecked, is predicted to have a nuclear weapon by the end of the decade. If Iraq can gain sufficient weapons-grade fissile material from external sources, Iraq could achieve a nuclear capability within a year.[11] The lack of inspections since 1998 only amplifies the uncertainties of Iraq's WMD program. Despite the growing danger, a senior administration official confirms that President Bush's case for war does not hinge on any "imminent threat of an Iraqi deployment of weapons of mass destruction."[12] Although the capabilities coefficient of Kass' threat model is relatively high, it is not grossly different from the WMD capabilities that Saddam enjoyed at the end of the Persian Gulf War and is not the decisive variable in answering "Why now?"

Assessing adversary intent is arguably the most difficult aspect of the threat equation, particularly when spanning the perceptual divide between cultures. Although all three nations of Bush's "axis of evil" possess WMD programs, the nature and behavior of Saddam's regime is unique. Saddam is an absolute dictator. He quickly resorts to torture, execution, and other forms of coercion to eliminate real or *suspected* enemies, their families, friends and colleagues. Even Saddam's family members are not immune. Saddam has killed 40 of his relatives including women and children.[13] As a result, almost no checks or balances counter Saddam's power. The

danger is that Saddam is an extreme risk-taker prone to enormous miscalculations. Kenneth Pollack writes that Saddam is "unintentionally suicidal [because] he miscalculates his odds of success and frequently ignores the odds of catastrophic failure…He is deeply ignorant of the outside world and surrounded by sycophants who tell him what he wants to hear"[14] The nature of Saddam's regime has led Iraq to attack Iran, to invade and occupy Kuwait, to employ chemical weapons on the battlefield and against internal dissent, and to openly praise the attacks of September 11th. While Iran and North Korea are potential threats, Iraq is a *proven* threat. However, although the intentions coefficient of Kass' threat model is high, it too has always been high. An analysis of intentions answers the question "Why Iraq (and not Iran or North Korea)?" but the question "Why now?" remains unanswered.

An illuminating aspect of the Kass model is the threat is zero when any of the three coefficients is assessed to be zero. Prior to September 11th, America's *perception* of its vulnerability was low and consequently its view of the threat was low. Saddam could be kept "in the box" far away in the Persian Gulf and did not directly impact the homeland security of the United States. September 11th illustrates the permeability of a free society to a diffuse, transnational threat armed with WMD capabilities. The unsolved anthrax attacks further highlight U.S. vulnerabilities and the transparency of the initiator of the attacks. In this context, Saddam's WMD capabilities are not only a regional menace but also a worldwide threat that can directly strike the U.S. homeland with devastating consequences. In his Cincinnati speech, President Bush resonated America's sense of vulnerability as he addressed its definitive impact to "Why now?" Bush remarked, "On September the 11th, 2001, America felt its vulnerability – even to threats that gather on the other side of the earth. We resolved then, and we are resolved

today, to confront every threat, from any source, that could bring sudden terror and suffering to America."[15]

NATIONAL INTERESTS

America's vital national interests are defined within the context of international and domestic constraints, address the threat and opportunities of the times, and form the foundation for the ends to be pursued by strategy. Current vital national interests are summarized in the Bush NSS and reflect the changed strategic landscape in the post-September 11th world.

1. Champion aspirations for human dignity
2. Strengthen alliances to defeat global terrorism and work to prevent attacks against us and our friends
3. Work with others to diffuse conflicts
4. Prevent our enemies from threatening us, our allies, and our friends with weapons of mass destruction
5. Ignite a new era of global economic growth through free markets and free trade
6. Expand the circle of development by opening societies and building the infrastructure of democracy
7. Develop agendas for cooperative action with other main centers of global power
8. Transform America's national security institutions to meet the challenges and opportunities of the twenty-first century[16]

Not surprisingly, the post-September 11th NSS adds the defeat of global terrorism as a vital national interest. However, the NSS also adds increased emphasis to America's core values (universal freedoms, free enterprise, democracy) when compared to the July 2000 Commission on America's National Interests. Consistent with missionary exceptionalism, each core value is dedicated as a separate national interest. Finally, multilateralism is emphasized in dealing with global terrorism, the WMD threat, diffusing conflict, and other agendas for cooperative action.

POLITICAL OBJECTIVES

The political objectives towards Iraq are congruent to the national interests. The six objectives shown below have been widely presented in presidential speeches, Congressional testimonies, and press interviews. The democratic aspect of the sixth objective is implied in

numerous statements highlighting the entitlement of the Iraqi people to universal freedoms and self-government.

1. Ensure Iraqi WMD disarmament
2. Instill a regime change in Iraq
3. Compel Iraqi compliance of United Nations Security Council Resolutions
4. End Iraqi support for terrorism
5. Maintain security and stability in the Persian Gulf region
6. Promote a unified (and democratic) Iraq[17]

A first among equals, success or failure in Iraq hinges on WMD disarmament. Unfortunately, recent emphasis on regime change implies military force over non-military instruments, degrades multinational support, alienates regional leaders, and incenses Arab publics. Nuance allows non-military instruments to return into consideration. For example, President Bush and Secretary of State Colin Powell now hint that Iraqi compliance with WMD disarmament and all other U.N. Security Council Resolutions changes the nature of the Iraq regime and is *in effect* a regime change. The fourth objective, ending Iraqi support for terrorism, ties Iraq with the greater effort against worldwide terrorism and diffuses criticism that Iraq diverts attention from the War on Global Terrorism. Finally, the last two objectives address the desired end state of a unified Iraq that is not a menace to its neighbors. Congruent to U.S. vital interests, a democratic Iraq is an internal U.S. goal. This objective is not pressed publicly since all Persian Gulf nations, nations whose support we need for the fight against terrorism and any potential military intervention, are distinctively undemocratic.

FAILURE OF DETERRENCE AND CONTAINMENT

Deterrence and containment have been central to U.S. non-military strategy towards Iraq. Effective deterrence requires adversary rationality, attribution, and a credible threat of retaliation. A marriage of terrorism and Iraqi WMD capability puts effective deterrence at risk. Rationality falls apart when the adversary is unintentionally suicidal, prone to great miscalculations, and

unchecked from abuses of power.[18] In the shadowy world of terrorism, attribution can be difficult. America is still trying to "connect the dots" for the September 11th attacks and determine the level of complicity and support of Iraq to Al-Qaeda. Finally, retaliation means little to terrorists whose passion and hatred breed personal indifference to death.

Containment of Iraq's WMD program by inspections, sanctions, and punitive raids has failed. In spite of certain modest successes to gain visibility into Iraq's WMD program and discover undocumented WMD capabilities, U.N. inspections teams were ultimately thwarted by a massive, coordinated Iraqi campaign of deception, denial, diversion, and dispersion. The absence of U.N. teams since 1998 have denied further on-site inspections, monitoring, and verification of Iraqi WMD activities. The effectiveness of sanctions has deteriorated as a result of determined Iraqi efforts to smuggle illegal goods and divert money earmarked for the Iraqi people. According to Kenneth Pollack, containment is irreparably fractured as fewer nations respect U.N.-mandated constraints. Smuggled Iraqi oil flows via Jordan, Syria, Turkey, and the Persian Gulf states have more than doubled since 1998. Furthermore, billions of dollars in illegal oil revenues have funded WMD activities and other military purchases.[19] When non-military means failed, limited strikes against WMD and other military targets have been met with a comprehensive rebuilding program.

NON-MILITARY STRATEGY: COERCIVE INSPECTIONS

The centerpiece of a new, non-military strategy to confront Iraq should be a coercive inspection regime, augmented by a constant credible threat of military force, to compel Saddam to disarm or face regime change by military intervention. These inspections, first proposed by Jessica Mathews of the Carnegie Endowment, are a radical change from UNSCOM. A multilateral, professional inspection team augmented by military force would conduct

unrestricted, no-notice inspections to any location in Iraq. No claims of Iraqi sanctuary would be permitted and temporary no-fly, no-drive perimeters could be established around the site to ensure the integrity of the inspections. The inspections teams would be led by a civilian, granted sufficient authority to remain free from Security Council interference, and empowered to make decisions at the operational level.[20] A clear set of standards to determine Iraqi compliance, to include a detailed schedule, are integral to a new framework. According to David Albright, the standards "must include a set of 'redlines' that…if crossed are sufficient justification for actions by…the Security Council. The most important redlines are adequate cooperation and transparency."[21]

DIPLOMATIC

To be effective, the diplomatic, economic, and informational elements of statecraft must support the strategy, remain congruent to the political objectives, and shape the environment for a military option should the non-military strategy fail. Multinational support is the key element to maintain legitimacy, isolate Iraq, and retain long-term, worldwide cooperation in the fight against terrorism. Traditional diplomacy should concentrate on U.N. Security Council support for coercive inspections and consequences for Iraqi non-compliance. Bush's challenge to U.N. relevancy was a good first step. The U.S. must continue to press Russia, China, and France for Security Council approval of coercive inspections. In these negotiations, the U.S. maintains a strong position for establishing a new system of inspections. Russia, China, and France do not want to become isolated from the international community over Iraq and want to keep the world's lone superpower engaged in the international political system. China and Russia also do not want to endanger strengthening ties with the U.S. on their own critical domestic issues.[22]

The U.S. must also press diplomatic initiatives with regional actors. The U.S. must consolidate support of regional friends for coercive inspections and for military intervention should inspections fail. Measures, such as host-nation support agreements, basing rights, and overflight clearances must all be coordinated. Historically divisive issues should be addressed aggressively to mitigate damage to a united front against Saddam. The Bush Administration should continue its hard line on Israel to prudently resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict while engaging the Palestinian leadership to reject terror, embrace democracy, and respect the rule of law.[23] Should Iraq attack Israel, the U.S. role in Israeli defense, potential Israeli response options, and Arab responses should be predetermined to the maximum extent possible. Inside Iraq, the roles and missions of opposition groups during military intervention should be established. Finally, U.S. and regional actor's roles should be addressed in a unified, post Saddam Iraq should military intervention be necessary.

Concurrent with traditional diplomacy, the U.S. and its allies must reach foreign publics using personal and electronic communications to highlight the need and merits of a new system of coercive inspections. Public diplomacy efforts must emphasize that Iraq is not only challenging the U.S. but is challenging the world and the relevancy of the U.N.[24] As such, the regime of Saddam Hussein, not the people of Iraq or Muslims in general, must be the target of renewed multilateral action. Terrorism or sponsorship of terror must be shown as illegitimate to any nation and as deplorable as slavery, piracy, and genocide.[25] To date, the U.S. and U.K. have been at the forefront of public diplomacy. Public release of the British "white paper" on WMD in English and Arabic, State Department "Response to Terrorism" and "Muslim Life in America" web sites, and interviews on Al Jazeera are all prominent examples.

The U.S. should expand its public diplomacy efforts to include other actors. International non-governmental organizations could effectively highlight Saddam's abusive human rights record. Public diplomacy contributions from regional Arab governments would increase multilateral credibility and overall support among the Muslim population.

ECONOMIC

The economic facet of the non-military strategy should remain tied to the current framework of sanctions. Resolution 1409, allowing import of most consumer goods, effectively blunted criticism that sanctions were targeted at the Iraqi people and not the Iraqi leadership.[26] Diplomatic pressure should be used to investigate violations and deter smuggling. The ongoing international investigation of an alleged Ukrainian sale to Iraq of an early warning radar system is an excellent example of sanctions enforcement.

Foreign aid is an increasingly important tool to confronting Iraq. Foreign aid can motivate regional nations to support the U.S. while alleviating fears of losing power. It may also be decisive in gaining support for military intervention. Covert aid to Jordan offsetting losses in Iraqi trade and rewarding support for a covert military presence may enable U.S. operations in west Jordan for strikes against Iraqi ballistic missile capabilities. Monetary aid to Turkey may secure basing rights for military intervention and support Turkish economic reform.

INFORMATIONAL

Collecting intelligence on a state determined to hide its WMD capability remains exceptionally difficult. Inspection teams must comprise of WMD experts who are knowledgeable of Iraqi denial and deception methods and trusted by their respective governments. Information sharing among team members and the governments they represent is critical to an integrated effort to determine Iraqi compliance. The inspection teams should have access to the intelligence

assets of the nations they represent to the maximum extent possible without damaging sources and methods.

MILITARY STRATEGY

If the non-military strategy fails, the U.S. should lead a multinational, military intervention to compel regime change and force Iraqi WMD disarmament. Failure of coercive inspections would be indicated by a refusal of Iraq to admit inspectors, a breach of inspector redline standards/timelines, or by an imminent/actual Iraqi attack. The U.S. should not press pre-emption as a universal doctrine but one that applies to the specific circumstances surrounding Iraq.

Multilateral participation is key to maintain overall international cooperation for the larger Global War on Terrorism, gain access and logistical support in the Persian Gulf region, minimize Islamic unrest, and enable effective nation-building at the end of the campaign. If possible, this intervention should be approved by a new Security Council resolution. A Security Council mandate legitimizes pre-emptive attack, strengthens international will, and validates military force as a final option.

If international politics make a new Security Council resolution unattainable, the U.S. should intervene with the multilateral support of like-minded nations. It must stress why further Security Council action is impossible or irrelevant and persuade world opinion that military force must now be used as a last resort. The U.S. should also make a legal argument that existing Security Council resolutions provide adequate authority for action.

POLITICAL PERCEPTIONS

If Iraq prompts military intervention by U.S. and coalition forces, only Saddam will truly know the rationale for this decision. Whether he again miscalculates U.S. resolve, possesses messianic ambition, or simply thinks Iraq can win, Saddam likely believes he can survive. An

Iraqi perspective to the Persian Gulf War, Kosovo, and Afghanistan sees impressive initial assaults by U.S. forces and little stomach for subsequent sustained ground warfare.

Iraq's political objective will be the survival of Saddam Hussein and senior Iraqi leadership. Towards this end, Iraq will aim to weather the initial assault. Subsequently, Iraq will prolong the war to such an extent that coalition costs, terrorism priorities, and Islamic unrest will, separately or in combination, pressure Washington into a negotiated settlement.

Besides American exceptionalism and vulnerability viewed in the light of September 11th, the cost of eliminating the threat *now* outweighs the risk of dealing with a nuclear-armed Saddam *later*. From the U.S. perspective, the coalition has a proven track record of gaining low-cost military solutions. To achieve the political objectives at an acceptable cost, the coalition must quickly eliminate the Iraqi regime as a functional command structure while minimizing any WMD response and maintaining control of the occupied territory. Attacks against field forces are targeted to precipitate cascading demoralization, ineffective resistance, and eventually mass capitulation.

MILITARY STRATEGIC SETTING

The military strategic setting is determined by the assumed conduct and character of war and the constraints imposed on military operations. The key assumption inherent to military intervention is that Iraq does not possess nuclear weapons or a combination of weaponized biological agents and delivery systems that could achieve nuclear-like lethalities. This assumption does not eliminate a lesser Iraqi WMD capability. Consequently, the predominant conduct of the war will be conventional with possible Iraqi escalation to WMD. The effect of deterrence and the willingness of Iraq to employ WMD are unknown. Anthony Cordesman,

Arleigh A. Burke Chair for Strategy at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, discusses that Iraq might launch on warning or under attack for the following reasons:

1. Maximize attrition: Early use of WMD maximizes U.S. casualties and makes a sustained offensive most difficult
2. Use-or-lose concept: Early use while Iraq still maintains control of weapons and communication with forces
3. Credibility gap: Use shows Iraqi will and heightens credibility of follow-on attacks
4. Force multiplier: Use increases survival of outmatched Iraqi forces
5. Messianic complex: WMD can directly strike Israel, raising its stature and support in the Arab world
6. Existential Response: Retaliatory use for impending defeat and overthrow of Saddam's regime[27]

The conduct of war will be a U.S.-led coalition versus an isolated Iraq. Although the composition of the coalition and specific member state contributions are unknown, Cordesman is confident that the U.S. will gain the regional support it needs for theater ports of disembarkation, staging, logistics, and force basing. Iraq, on the other hand, will not receive any direct support from neighboring countries or the Arab world. The most support it can expect is "sympathetic but largely insincere political rhetoric."[28]

Israel remains an independent wild card. The Bush-Sharon meeting on 16 October 2002 sidestepped the issue of Israeli response options to an Iraqi attack on Israel. Bush confirmed, "If Iraq [attacked] Israel tomorrow, I assume the prime minister would respond."[29] The Israeli response to an Iraqi attack in the midst of U.S-led military intervention is unclear. However, based on the assessment that Iraq cannot cause nuclear-like lethalities against Iraq, the assumed constraint is that Israel would, at most, respond conventionally in a coordinated assault with coalition forces. Israel would also not widen its response to include strikes against other Arab nations.

MILITARY OBJECTIVES

Clausewitz writes that military objectives must be aligned to political aims as well as consistent to contextual constraints and opportunities. To Clausewitz, identification of belligerent centers of gravity focuses campaign planning on key considerations and avoids wasteful energy on peripheral concerns. In the Iraqi context, Saddam is truly "the hub of all power and movement, on which everything depends."[30] He has spent an entire career ensuring that no effective opposition exists in Iraq. A complex security apparatus, to include the Special Security Organization and the Special Republican Guard, remains key to Saddam's hold on power. These select groups are chosen by their loyalty to Saddam, equipped with the best available military equipment, and are dedicated to regime security for Baghdad and personal security for Saddam.[31] Once these groups are disabled, popular support for the regime, the loyalty of regular military forces, and the survival of Saddam himself is in question. Iraq's WMD arsenal underpins a potentially deadly asymmetric strategy against coalition conventional strengths and forms the operational center of gravity. Once this capability is destroyed, Iraq will lose its primary offensive capability and the only significant means it has to project power outside of its borders.

U.S. resolve is the friendly center of gravity. Key vulnerabilities, particularly in a protracted conflict, are excessive friendly and civilian casualties, pervasive collateral damage, resistance to international/Islamic pressures, and changed priorities due to imperatives in the Global War on Terror. Iraqi exploitation of these decisive points could lead to a negotiated settlement versus regime change.

These centers of gravity focus our definition of military objectives. They help ensure that military objectives remain congruent to political objectives and the desired end state. The proposed military objectives for a U.S.-led military intervention of Iraq are:

1. Gain and maintain air superiority
2. Disrupt and dislocate the functioning of the Iraqi government and its means of communications, command, and control (C3)
3. Destroy Iraq's existing and potential capabilities for nuclear, biological, and chemical (NBC) warfare
4. Dismantle Saddam's special security apparatus and other troops that remain loyal to Saddam Hussein regime
5. Create conditions for mass capitulation of Iraqi fielded forces and loss of popular support for Saddam Hussein
6. Enforce the post-war peace and facilitate nation-building in post-Saddam Iraq

MILITARY CAPABILITIES AND VULNERABILITIES

A comparison of military capabilities shows that a U.S.-led coalition can achieve the proposed military objectives while mitigating its own vulnerabilities. According to Anthony Cordesman, Iraq dominates the region in military power even though it lost 40% of its forces in the Gulf War. Iraq still maintains a 375,000-man army and has another 400,000 men in the reserves. These troops are armed with mostly combat-worn and obsolescent weapons to include 2,200 main battle tanks, 3,700 other armored vehicles, and 2,400 major artillery weapons. Six Republican Guard divisions and four Special Republican Guard Brigades form the vanguard of Iraq's ground power. Handpicked by Saddam for tribal origin and loyalty, these elite units have trained for urban warfare and security operations. The combat readiness of the remaining regular army is problematic. Regular army units are reliant on conscripts, short on combat experience or exercise training, uneducated in combined arms employment and lack priority for funding.[32]

Iraq's air force, air defense forces, and naval forces also suffered in the last decade. Iraq's air force can only maintain 300 combat aircraft in limited operational status. Scripted, unrealistic training hinders initiative and relies on centralized ground control. Iraq's air defense network is

still one of the most extensive systems in the world but has been limited to optical tracking and shoot-and-scoot tactics. A decade of no-fly zone confrontations has improved Iraqi air defense decoy and deception efforts but has not resulted in the downing of a single coalition aircraft.[33] Finally, Iraq's navy was not rebuilt after the Gulf War. Naval defenses are limited to shore-based anti-ship missiles and a large stockpile of naval mines.[34]

Discussed earlier, Iraq's unconventional capabilities point to a rebuilt and expanding WMD program. These forces pose a significant threat but will not achieving nuclear-like lethalities in the near future. CIA assessments for delivery vehicles include a few dozen ballistic missiles and UAV/support aircraft prototypes from several development programs.[35]

As opposed to the static trend of Iraqi forces, the overall superiority of U.S. and potential coalition military forces has increased. Sanctions have prevented recapitalization and modernization of Iraqi forces while potential coalition members have spent billions on new arms and implemented significant warfighting upgrades. Iraqi exercise training has been extremely limited while coalition forces have spent a decade upgrading doctrine and capabilities for urban warfare, ballistic missile defense, and warfighting in a chemical/biological environment. These doctrinal improvements and capability upgrades have benefited from the experience of numerous expeditionary contingencies over the past decade.

These advantages show that the size of coalition forces is limited by basing, deployment, and support constraints and not by capability. Unlike 1990, the U.S. maintains substantial pre-positioned equipment, robust air power assets, and considerable infrastructure in theater. The majority of these assets must remain available to coalition forces to mount a viable military strategy.

Military vulnerabilities remain remarkably unchanged a decade after Desert Storm. High tempo, parallel operations favor coalition forces and expose Iraq to mass military defections and public revolt in the face of decisive defeat. Protracted, sequential operations favor a centralized Iraqi force looking to impact U.S. resolve and force a negotiated settlement. Best stated by Liddell Hart, "the chief incalculable [in war] is the human will, which manifests itself in resistance."[36] A modern application of Liddell Hart's indirect approach can best shape the variability of will on both sides. As a strategic concept, the indirect approach can exploit coalition advantages, diminish the possibility of Iraqi resistance, and protect U.S. resolve.

STRATEGIC CONCEPT

Liddell Hart said, "dislocation is the aim of strategy."[37] More specifically, strategy leverages maneuver and surprise in an indirect approach to synergize physical and psychological dislocation. In Desert Storm, dislocation required deployment of 500,000 troops, a five-week air campaign and a massive ground assault involving nine divisions.[38] The U.S. cannot expect the luxury of such overwhelming numbers for this campaign. With survival at stake, Saddam will have every incentive to use chemical and biological weapons at ports of disembarkation and staging areas. Saddam also knows that he cannot win a set-piece desert battle. Saddam is likely to withdraw elite Republican Guard units to defend the cities, especially Baghdad and Tikrit, and fight a protracted war of attrition. These new challenges require a new strategy to gain dislocation. A synchronized, near-simultaneous, two-phase campaign emphasizing air power, fast-moving armored ground forces, and special operations can achieve our military objectives and minimize vulnerabilities.

The overarching philosophy present in this new strategy is to foster a war of liberation where the government and not the country is the focus of attack. As such, an aggressive psychological

campaign must be waged to encourage Iraqi public support, guarantee Iraqi officers a role in transforming Iraq, and to deter use of WMD. Infrastructure targets should be spared to blunt increased public support for Saddam Hussein under a "rally around the flag" mentality and to enable nation-building at the end of the campaign.

The likelihood of a pre-emptive WMD attack during force deployments drives an "optimal force" strategy versus an "overwhelming force" strategy. Accepting the risk of a smaller force allows quicker deployments, smaller staging areas, and increased pre-positioning of equipment in theater. Coalition force deployments can also be distributed across the theater to deny mass targets inside ballistic missile range or to remain outside of missile range completely. These measures collectively can preserve operational surprise with a widely dispersed, relatively small force that can be reinforced quickly.[39]

The opening phase of the war will embrace Liddell Hart's "dispersed strategic advance" to paralyze enemy action rather than crushing his forces.[40] Hundreds of fighters, bombers, and cruise missiles will strike targets sets tied to all of the military objectives, save peace enforcement, in an intensive, parallel assault. Offensive counter air will suppress and destroy the enemy air defense network, disable Iraqi airfields, and destroy Iraqi fighters. Strategic attacks on Iraqi headquarters and their C3 network will isolate fielded forces from centralized control and blind Iraqi leaders on the condition of their forces and the status of their country. Synchronized special operations and air attacks will locate and destroy mobile missile launchers and other NBC infrastructure. Massive, coordinated air strikes will target concentrations of elite Republican Guard units in their assembly areas before they have an opportunity to move into, and try to hide in, population centers. Presidential palaces, secret police facilities, intelligence centers, and other regime targets will be struck to sever Saddam from the trappings of power.[41]

The ground campaign ensures the dislocation manifested in the parallel air campaign becomes permanent. The main effort, encompassing 2-3 divisions of armor and mechanized infantry, will press towards Baghdad from the south. A supporting force, including elements of an airborne division and special forces will stage out of Northern Iraq with Kurdish support.[42] Despite the campaign emphasis on dislocation, the biggest unknown is the level of resistance in the cities. In the race for Baghdad, secondary urban areas can initially be isolated and bypassed while still trying to influence enemy forces to surrender. Ultimately, ground forces must be prepared to maintain the initiative and conduct urban warfare to force capitulation.

This ground force is not sized to blunt a determined Iraqi ground offensive. Although not likely, Saddam's most dangerous course of action is a pre-emptive ground offensive, directly supported by WMD, before or during the deployment phase. If air power cannot blunt the offensive, ground forces may be unable to maintain a lengthy defense. A reserve army division and additional air power must be ready to deploy and reinforce such a contingency.

POTENTIAL RESULTS

After a decade of sanctions, inspections, and interventions, Iraq has little ability to defeat a determined military assault. This strategic concept can defeat Iraq and force a regime change. In the short term, the demise of Saddam will ensure full WMD disarmament, end state-sponsored terrorism, and enable Iraqi compliance to all other U.N. Security Council Resolutions. Long-term peacekeeping efforts and nation-building programs are required to foster democratic and free market institutions, to prevent disintegration along ethnic and religious lines, and to ensure peace and prosperity in the Persian Gulf.

Although financial costs are debatable, a comparison is available. Robert Samuelson writes that a war bill of $100B (compared to $61B in 1991) makes defense spending roughly 4%

GDP in 2003. When compared to defense spending of 9% GDP in Vietnam and 14% for Korea, America can afford this war.[43]

Human costs are not so measurable. The unknowns surrounding Iraqi WMD employment and urban warfare defy antiseptic assessments. The strategic concept is designed to dislocate the enemy and diminish resistance. It cannot eliminate resistance completely. All of the assumptions, particularly military cohesion and popular support for Saddam, must be reassessed during the air campaign before launching the ground phase of the campaign.

CONCLUSION

> *The final decision of a whole war is not always to be regarded as absolute. The conquered state often sees in it only a passing evil, which may be repaired in after times by means of political combinations.*
>
> *-Carl Von Clausewitz, On War*[44]

According to Clausewitz, an enemy surrender may not resolve the conflict if its will is unbroken. Saddam sees U.N. resolutions as "only a passing evil" and his "political combinations" have undermined a decade of containment and deterrence.

An improved, U.N.-led coercive inspection regime is a final non-military strategy to compel Saddam to disarm. Redline standards for compliance supported by an unequivocal threat of force may finally prove to Saddam that U.N. resolutions are a *permanent evil* that may only be resolved by disarmament. If inspections fail, a pre-emptive attack must force a regime change before Iraq gains a nuclear capability.

The risk to coalition forces will be high. With survival at stake, Saddam will likely resort to WMD in his defense. If the international community does not act, the costs will be higher. In backing down to Iraq, other nations will see that a credible threat of chemical or biological attack deterred U.S. action. Nations that pursue weapons of terror should feel less secure, not more. Even worse, Iraq on its present course will gain a nuclear capability. If we do not ensure

disarmament now, the cost of intervention against a nuclear Iraq will be much higher. Today, the risks of acting, either by inspections or military intervention, are far less than waiting for a proven nuclear capability.

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